

DAVID KORDANSKY GALLERY

David Kordansky Gallery is pleased to present Begin Again, Adam Pendleton's first exhibition at the gallery. The show of new work will be on view November 7 through December 19, 2020 at the gallery's Edgewood Place location. David Kordansky Gallery is currently open by appointment. Timed reservations and virtual visits are available [here](#).

Begin Again includes paintings from the Untitled (WE ARE NOT) series, works on Mylar, and a video portrait, unfolding across three exhibition spaces in the gallery.

Originally constructed from the artist's signature spray paintings, Pendleton's series Untitled (WE ARE NOT) are fields of the repeated phrase "WE ARE NOT" rendered in black and white ink. These fields are in a sense polyphonic, thick with many different attempts. Ambiguously an unresolved negative predication and/or a negative assertion of existence, the utterance is semi-systematically multiplied and opened up. The unregulated materiality of the spray paint—with its high-contrast drips and particle effects—creates a sense of continuous variation on the canvas, as well as an uncanny surface that at once flattens out and recedes into depth. The textual fields negotiate between noise and information, where negation gives way to entropy, or becoming.

Pendleton's works on Mylar (or "drawings," as the artist refers to them) are hung across one room of the gallery in expansive grids of individually framed works, and derive from collages in which the artist layers sketches, brushwork, and cut paper with fragments of language and images from a library of materials. Photocopied book pages—largely related to post-colonial African history, African sculpture, and European modernism—are masked, overprinted, and overwritten. Phrases, slogans, incomplete propositions—"OK DADA"... "BUT NOW WE"... "NOW I AM HERE"... "SEE THE SIN"... "BLACK DADA"... "I AM NOW THE"... "WHO IS QUEEN"—are staggered and recombined across the grid. The collages, printed in dark, opaque black on transparent film, are tracings of Pendleton's archive of visual research, implying further acts of layering. When viewed together, this typology expresses a continuous procedure of interpolation, recapitulation, and expansion.

A black box viewing room encloses the video What Is Your Name? Kyle Abraham, A Portrait (2018–2019). This work is an exchange between Pendleton and the celebrated dancer and choreographer Kyle Abraham. As in many of Pendleton's previous video portraits, the work is a process of complication: conceived, shot, and cut in a way that does not so much represent or figure, as abstract and refract its subject. Throughout, Pendleton poses questions to Abraham, who modifies his answers as the questions are repeated. A long, stuttering list, mostly of infinitive phrases ("to divide by / to stand up / to sit down..."), but occasionally resolving into sentences, accompanies Abraham's dancing at one point. Chains of queries, answers, gestures, verbs, and isolated fragments of the body—shared among Pendleton, Abraham, and the camera—form a multimodal grammar of movement. The work is Pendleton's third video portrait to date that explores movement, memory, and choreography with dancers. Previous video works by Pendleton include Just Back From Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer (2016–2017) and Ishmael in the Garden: A Portrait of Ishmael Houston-Jones (2018).

Pendleton's montages, from painting to collage to video, engage in nonlinear iteration: never oriented toward any determinate position, they are constantly beginning, although not returning to the same, nor relying on simple difference. This activity of beginning without end, which occurs at the level of language and syntax (the unfinished and unresolved statement) as well as at the level of artistic form (the suggestion that even finished works are still open to further production), refuses closure, putting stake in something closer to a continuous present. Cycling through sets of sentences, fragments, images, artifacts, histories, and other propositions, the constant activity of beginning develops what Gertrude Stein once called a "troubling time-sense." We might understand this as a mode of composition that redistributes, equilibrates, troubles time: troubling history, present, and future.

In 2021, Adam Pendleton will present Who Is Queen, a major installation in the atrium of The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Other recent solo exhibitions include shows at Le Consortium, Dijon (2020); Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (2020); MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts (2018); Baltimore Museum of Art (2017); KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin (2017); Baltic Center for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, United

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Kingdom (2017); Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (2017); Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (2016); and Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans (2016). Recent group exhibitions include To Be Determined, Dallas Museum of Art (2020); Manifesto: Art x Agency, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (2019); Public Movement: On Art, Politics and Dance, Moderna Museet Malmö, Sweden (2017); The Eighth Climate (What does art do?), 11th Gwangju Biennale, South Korea (2016); and Personne et les autres, Belgian Pavilion, 56th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice (2015). Pendleton's work is included in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; and Tate, London, among other institutions. He lives and works in New York.